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President: Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral ..... (Portugal)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda item 38

The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti

Report of the Secretary-General (A/50/548)

Draft resolution (A/50/L.53)

The President: I call on the representative of Brazil to introduce draft resolution A/50/L.53.

Mr. Amorim (Brazil): On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and of the group of countries Friends of the Secretary-General for Haiti, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/50/L.53, on the situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti.

The preambular part of this text recalls all relevant resolutions adopted on the question by the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights, as well as by the Organization of American States (OAS). It reaffirms that the goal of the international community remains the full observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the promotion of social and economic development in Haiti. It welcomes the legislative and municipal elections in Haiti and stresses the willingness of the Government of Haiti to hold the forthcoming presidential elections in accordance with the Constitution. The text supports the continuing leadership of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the OAS in the efforts to further political progress in Haiti, welcoming the success of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) and the contributions of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his staff, as well as the continued efforts by States to provide humanitarian assistance and technical cooperation to the people of Haiti. It fully supports the contribution of the International Civilian Mission to Haiti (MICIVIH), pays tribute to its members and staff and welcomes the continuous improvement in the situation of human rights in Haiti, taking note of the report of the Secretary General of 12 October 1995.

The operative part welcomes the report of the Secretary-General outlining the continuation until 7 February 1996 of the joint participation of the United Nations with the Organization of American States in MICIVIH. In this respect, the text affirms that the General Assembly stands ready, at the appropriate time

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and at the request of the Haitian authorities, to extend the United Nations component of MICIVIH beyond that date. It expresses full support for the International Civilian Mission and the Assembly's trust that the Government of Haiti will continue to afford it timely, complete and effective cooperation. It commends the Haitian authorities on the progress accomplished in the advance of democracy, the respect of human rights and the reconstruction of Haiti, paying tribute to the Haitian people in their ongoing quest for strong and lasting democracy. It expresses appreciation to those States participating in UNMIH and those that have accompanied the Haitian people in their efforts to return to constitutional order and democracy. It also expresses confidence that the forthcoming presidential elections will further strengthen democracy in Haiti. The text reaffirms the commitment of the international community to increase its technical, economic and financial cooperation with Haiti. It commends the cooperation between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the OAS, requesting the Secretary-General of the United Nations to support the Government of Haiti and to continue to coordinate the efforts of the United Nations system to help provide humanitarian aid and meet the development requirements of Haiti. Finally, the text requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly regular reports on the work of the International Civilian Mission to Haiti and decides that the General Assembly will keep open its consideration of this item.

It is the hope of the sponsors of draft resolution A/50/L.53 that the General Assembly will be able to adopt this text by consensus.

Mr. Fowler (Canada) (*interpretation from French*): Haiti has just gone through one of the most crucial and eventful years in its history. Since the return of President Aristide to the country on 15 October 1994, some important groundwork has been done. Progress has been made in three key areas: strengthening and consolidating Haiti's democracy, respect for human rights and economic reconstruction.

A legitimate Government has been put back in place and constitutional order has been re-established. Neither the international community nor Haitians should underestimate the significance of this event. Democratic elections were held over the summer and, for the first time, the majority of the Haitian electorate was able to vote. The Haitian people was able to choose not only its representatives in Parliament but also thousands of local representatives. We are confident that the forthcoming presidential elections will further strengthen democracy in Haiti.

The recent report of the Secretary-General indicates a marked improvement in the human rights situation. In particular, the rights to freedom of expression and association have been re-established, and the systematic resort to cruel and degrading treatment by the authorities has ceased.

This progress can be attributed in large measure to the restoration of law and order. In this regard, the first class of Haitian National Police officers has graduated and is being deployed throughout the country. The Justice Academy began to function last July. We are witnessing a gradual improvement in the justice system. Finally, in the economic area, we note that international assistance has resumed. At the same time, the Haitian Government has taken numerous measures to promote the country's economic recovery.

(*spoke in English*)

These three areas — democracy, human rights and reconstruction — are interdependent. Economic renewal can only serve to bolster democratic institutions and promote respect for human rights. Conversely, a secure and stable environment will allow all Haitians to participate in and contribute to Haiti's economic recovery. As a result, the achievements in these areas are of crucial importance.

While these developments mark real progress and suggest that a secure and stable environment is now within reach, we note with regret that violent incidents continue to occur. In particular, the international community was dismayed to learn of the deplorable

attack that took the life of Jean-Hubert Feuillé, a recently elected members of Parliament.

Just a few weeks ago, the independent expert appointed by the United Nations to report on the situation of human rights in Haiti, Mr. Adama Dieng, commented on the continuing culture of impunity. He noted in his report of 1 November that the judicial system continues to show the scars of years of dictatorship in Haiti and that judicial reform remains a priority.

These are some of the many indicators which demonstrate that the situation remains fragile. There is still a way to go in creating an immutable foundation for democracy in Haiti. However, as it faces these challenges, Haiti need not feel that it stands alone. As the Secretary-General has noted, the international community will willingly provide continued support to the Haitian Government if so requested.

The Secretary-General's progress report on UNMIH identifies several sectors in which he believes that international assistance continues to be required: police training, assistance in the effective organization of the presidential elections, reform of the judicial and penal systems and development assistance. We welcome the recent statement of the President of the Security Council in response to this report, reaffirming the continued United Nations commitment to peace and democracy in Haiti.

As one of the friends of Haiti, Canada remains convinced that ensuring peace and stability for generations to come in Haiti is intimately bound up with unequivocal international support for its developing democratic and judicial institutions. For this reason we have made a long-term commitment to Haiti's peace and stability. At this juncture Canada stands ready, in consultation with the Haitian Government, to continue to provide assistance to the Haitian people and Government.

I should like to conclude my remarks by saying that Canada supports the draft resolution before us on the situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti. It is important that the Assembly demonstrate its support for the Government and the people of Haiti in the progress made to date and signal its continuing commitment to the consolidation of democracy in Haiti.

Mr. Maruyama (Japan): At our meeting here last year to consider the situation in Haiti my delegation was pleased to have the opportunity to express the profound satisfaction of the Government of Japan at the return of the legally and democratically elected President of Haiti, Mr. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and to salute the Haitian people, who fought with courage and unwavering determination for his return.

Today, I am pleased to acknowledge that in the intervening year the people of Haiti have made significant advances towards the goal of restoring democracy and the rule of law to their country. Japan wishes in particular to commend all those who worked for and participated in the legislative and local elections that took place between June and September. Although there were some organizational irregularities, the elections were deemed to have been generally free and fair and are recognized as an important first step towards building the institutions that are essential to any democratic society.

I should like to express my appreciation to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and to his Special Representative, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, for their vigorous and ongoing efforts on behalf of Haiti. I also wish to pay high tribute to the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) and the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH) for their indispensable roles in the process of restoring democracy and improving the human-rights situation there. The cooperative attitude which the Aristide Administration has shown towards them is truly commendable. I trust that hereafter as well the Government and the people of Haiti will continue to extend to these international efforts their full cooperation.

While remarkable progress has been made, the hard work is by no means over. Much remains to be done to ensure that democracy and respect for human rights take firm hold. The next crucial step in that process is the presidential election, which, despite some recent signs of instability in Haiti, is still scheduled to take place this coming Sunday, 17 December. The importance of

holding the election as planned cannot be exaggerated. All political parties in the country are urged to cooperate and to encourage the Haitian people who support them to participate in the election and, ultimately, in the democratic reconstruction of their country. Japan sincerely hopes that the presidential election will be carried out in a manner that is free and fair, thus ensuring the smooth transfer of the reins of government and providing a firm foundation for the consolidation of democracy in Haiti.

The international community demonstrated its solid support for the return of President Aristide. Various countries participated in the initial multinational force and are now participating in UNMIH and MICIVIH. But here again, more needs to be done. In Japan's view, it is now incumbent upon the international community to strengthen its efforts to promote the closely related goals of achieving social stability and economic prosperity. The acts of violence and demonstrations that we have recently witnessed in Haiti have heightened Japan's concern for the security situation in the country, a situation that is exacerbated by the severe economic difficulties which the great majority of the population is experiencing.

Japan will continue to follow developments in Haiti closely and to contribute to its economic and social development. Following President Aristide's resumption of his office, my Government provided a total of $30.5 million in assistance, comprising grant aid as well as emergency and humanitarian assistance, through the World Food Programme and the International Committee of the Red Cross. Also included in that amount was an allocation of $3 million to the United Nations Trust Fund to assist the international police monitoring programme and the creation of a Haitian national police force. In March, Japan sent an economic-cooperation survey team to Haiti to identify those areas where its assistance is most needed and to establish priorities among them. As a result of that exercise, in extending cooperation Japan now places the greatest emphasis on the fulfilment of basic human needs, including health and medical treatment. It also extends assistance for infrastructure building, including transportation and communication, human-resources development and agriculture.

In addition to providing economic assistance, Japan dispatched an observer team to assist in the international effort to monitor the legislative and local elections and has organized two seminars on police administration, inviting several Haitian police officers for training in Japan, and a seminar on democratization, to which it invited senior officials of the Haitian Government.

As I have suggested, Haiti's journey towards peace and prosperity is still in its early stages. Japan will of course continue to follow the progress made in Haiti's democratization and reconstruction efforts, and it stands ready to extend further support as it deems appropriate. I believe it is important to stress, however, that while the international community will continue to lend its support to the Haitian people, as it has done throughout the ordeals of recent years, it is only the Haitian people themselves who can ensure that democracy will flourish. It is through their own efforts that the promise of prosperity will be fulfilled. The people of Haiti should be confident in the knowledge that if they stay the course and continue to work with patience and determination for national reconciliation and reconstruction, their efforts will be richly rewarded.

Mr. Zulueta (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): It is an honour for me to address the Assembly on behalf of the European Union. We welcome the 12 October 1995 report of the Secretary-General (A/50/548), which underscores the important role of the International Civilian Mission to Haiti (MICIVIH) in connection with full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and with the establishment of the climate of freedom and tolerance that is necessary to achieve lasting constitutional democracy in Haiti. The contribution of MICIVIH to the restoration of democracy, carried out in conditions that were difficult and sometimes dangerous before the return of President Aristide, reflects the international community's commitment to the people of Haiti. This is of particular importance at this new stage: that of the consolidation of democracy.

We take note of the intention of the Secretary-General to recommend an extension of the mandate of

MICIVIH beyond 7 February 1996. Next February, the General Assembly should consider any such recommendation and adopt the relevant resolution. We also welcome the 6 November report of the Secretary-General (S/1995/922) on the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH). We commend the efforts of UNMIH towards the successful fulfilment of its mandate and support the intention of the Secretary-General to reduce the Mission as the end of its mandate approaches. We share the opinion of the Secretary-General that the establishment of a professional police force capable of maintaining law and order throughout the country is fundamental for the long-term stability of Haiti.

The legislative and municipal elections held on 25 June and the second round held on 17 September took place in a climate free of coercion and indicate the qualitative improvement in the situation of Haiti, which makes it possible for the people to determine its own future. We commend all the parties for their overall efforts to contribute to the peaceful progress of the elections. The work of the Election Observation Mission of the Organization of American States (OAS), the role of MICIVIH in supervising the exercise of fundamental freedoms during the elections, and the participation of the European Union through the assistance and observers it provided all underscore the importance that the international community attaches to this process.

Elections are an essential step towards the consolidation of democracy in Haiti. The European Union considers that the presidential elections scheduled for 17 December should reinforce the achievements already made and should provide an example of harmony and tolerance, so that the entire population of Haiti can attain genuine national reconciliation and lay the foundations for the political, economic and social reconstruction of their country.

We are concerned by recent acts of violence in Haiti. We appeal to all political forces to participate in, and demonstrate their firm commitment to, the successful organization of free, fair and peaceful presidential elections. To that end, all relevant parties must respect the rule of law and promote national reconciliation and cooperation, united in the objective of achieving lasting peace, democracy and development in Haiti.

The human rights situation in Haiti has improved considerably, and the help of MICIVIH is making it possible to undertake the institutional reforms necessary to ensure the establishment of a State genuinely founded on the rule of law. We welcome the fact that the working relationship of MICIVIH and the Haitian authorities at all levels is good and productive, which is important for the Mission's effectiveness in fulfilling its mandate, in particular with respect to measures to prevent violations of human rights and to strengthen human rights safeguards.

The European Union considers that these are measures in the right direction and that they should focus, *inter alia*, on strengthening the criminal justice system, on improving the treatment accorded to detainees and the conduct of law-enforcement officials, on reform of the penal code, on Government ratification of instruments of international humanitarian law to which it is party, and on the establishment of the office of public defender, as provided for in the Constitution of Haiti.

The consolidation of democracy in Haiti is a process that will not end with the holding of elections. The Government and the people of Haiti will still face the enormous task of carrying out socio-economic reconstruction and of guaranteeing the democratic solidity of its institutions, ensuring a secure, stable and free future for all Haitians.

The responsibility for the success of this endeavour lies with the Haitian people. The European Union will continue to support the efforts of the United Nations and of the Organization of American States to attain these objectives, making it possible for Haiti to join fully the trend towards democracy in the Americas.

Mr. Castelli (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation is proud to participate in the Assembly's debate on agenda item 38, entitled "The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti". Draft resolution A/50/L.53 reaffirms that a central goal

remains the full observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the promotion of social and economic development in Haiti.

The draft resolution also praises the recent legislative and municipal elections and the willingness of the people and the Government of Haiti to meet the timetable for the forthcoming presidential elections, which, in our view, will be a decisive step towards consolidation of democracy in that fraternal country.

My delegation wishes to thank the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and of the Organization of American States (OAS), and is grateful for the effective work carried out by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his staff. We appreciate also the major humanitarian assistance and technical cooperation that has been provided, and we salute the contribution of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) and the International Civilian Mission to Haiti (MICIVIH) to the creation of a climate of freedom and tolerance, which is conducive to the total observance of human rights and the full restoration of constitutional democracy.

We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his full report and state our support for the possible extension of the mandate of MICIVIH in accordance with the provisions of the draft resolution before us. We reiterate our support for the Mission; we are confident that the Haitian Government will continue its effective and complete cooperation. We praise the Haitian authorities for the progress they have achieved towards the consolidation of democracy and the strengthening of democratic institutions.

For all those reasons, and because we consider that draft resolution A/50/L.53 is a new milestone on the path to the consolidation of democracy in Haiti — a process my country has followed so closely and carefully, cooperating both in deeds and in political efforts with all that could constitute solidarity with the Haitian people in its suffering — my delegation has joined in sponsoring the draft resolution. We trust that it will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Kirkland (United States of America): The determination of the Haitian people and the hard work of the hundreds of professional human rights monitors of the International Civilian Mission to Haiti has paid off. By this weekend, Haiti will reach the milestone President Aristide has so often cited as the true test of establishing democracy: the second free presidential election. By February, the installation of a second freely-elected president will find Haiti meeting that test.

We pay tribute today to the work of the International Civilian Mission to Haiti — not only since the restoration of democracy to Haiti, but also in the difficult and often dangerous circumstances before President Aristide returned. Members of the Mission were the first representatives of the international community's will to help the Haitian people in their struggle to re-establish human rights and democracy. If the Haitian people so desire, they can be on hand to help a new government continue the course which President Aristide's return began.

These observers, representing 46 nationalities, help to promote respect for human rights in Haiti, and represent a fine example of effective coordination between the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS). Their efforts both spearhead and symbolize the broad commitment of the international community to building democracy.

Their work, alongside the Government of Haiti, the United Nations Mission in Haiti, the United Nations Development Programme and others, has resulted in a substantial decline in the number of human rights violations in Haiti. Free expression is now the norm.

None the less, some politically motivated violence, including murders of prominent persons, has continued. This is unacceptable. The civilian mission's continued role in investigating politically motivated violence must be supported — and we do support it.

Our task is to encourage the people of Haiti to remain committed to the electoral process, to encourage Haiti's electoral authorities to conduct that process wisely

and fairly, and to encourage Haiti's political parties to remain engaged in that process. We remain fully committed to helping Haiti on the road to democracy.

Once a new president has been elected, we stand ready to continue the mandate of the International Civilian Mission to Haiti to assure that, as the second freely-elected president takes office, the all-important second transition can take place in a continuing atmosphere of human rights improvement. We pledge our willingness today to continue that mandate at the request of Haiti's yet-to-be-elected new government. And we look forward to the work of the United Nations and OAS teams of observers in the upcoming presidential elections.

Mr. Boucher (Barbados): I have the honour to speak on draft resolution A/50/L.53 entitled "The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti" on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and its States Members of the United Nations: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, and my own country, Barbados. We would wish to be associated fully with the introductory statement made by the representative of Brazil on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

As this General Assembly is well aware, the peoples of the CARICOM States share strong bonds of history and culture with the people of Haiti. Thus, from the outset, CARICOM States have attached the highest importance to achieving the basic goals of the international community, which are reaffirmed in the resolution before us; in particular, restoration of democratic order in Haiti, including the full observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the promotion of economic and social development. Notwithstanding their meagre security resources, CARICOM States have underscored their strong commitment to these goals by participating in the multinational force and the United Nations Mission in Haiti.

We welcome the progress achieved so far in the areas of human rights and democracy in Haiti. CARICOM States applaud the role played by the United Nations Mission in Haiti, the leadership of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States, and commend the work of the International Civilian Mission and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and all the friends of Haiti. But it is the Haitian people themselves to whom we pay a special compliment for their indomitable quest for democracy and freedom, under most trying circumstances. The road ahead to full democracy for Haiti will be long and difficult. For the first time since its independence almost two hundred years ago, a culture of human rights and democracy is beginning to take root.

CARICOM States are mindful that progress will be uneven — sometimes slow — and that the Government of Haiti will need sustained support by the international community to build the foundations for lasting peace and social and economic progress. The recent outbreak of violence reminds us of the still fragile nature of the democratic process and the crucial need to quicken the pace of national reconciliation. Given the Government's commitment to the democratic process, we urge the international community to stay the course with Haiti.

The difficulties of logistics and organization were all too evident in the first round of elections, which took place on 25 June. They underscore the need to step up the process of national capacity-building. We welcome the Government's commitment to the full and successful execution of the electoral process, consistent with the provisions of the Constitution, culminating in the upcoming presidential elections on 17 December.

CARICOM States wish to emphasize, however, that progress towards democracy and full respect for human rights must be underpinned by corresponding progress in the economic and social fields, including substantial improvement in reducing poverty. Unlike the experience of the other developing countries of the hemisphere, the Haitian people have shared relatively little in the fruits of development. For Haiti, this draft resolution underlines the need to give practical effect to the right to

development as a fundamental human right, as reaffirmed at Vienna.

In this context, the continued support of the United Nations system and the international community, which is recognized in this draft resolution, will be critical in providing the people of Haiti with a second chance to secure a democratic future, in which their political and development aspirations can be fulfilled.

The substantive phase of the work carried out by the International Civilian Mission will come to an end on 7 February 1996. It will have been a job well done in most difficult circumstances. The Government and people of Haiti must continue apace with the crucial tasks of national capacity-building and reconstruction in all their dimensions. This draft resolution reaffirms once again the support and commitment of the international community in Haiti's long march towards democracy, human rights, political stability and development. CARICOM States will do their part to help achieve these goals.

Mr. Gaussot (France) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation naturally associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union.

I should like merely to say a few words as the representative of a member country of the group of Friends of the Secretary-General on the question of Haiti.

France is gratified by the overall favourable development of the situation in Haiti. It pays tribute to the unquestionable role played by the International Civilian Mission to Haiti (MICIVIH) in helping restore democracy in this country. This Mission, even before the arrival of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH), played a major role in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms, holding open lines of communication with the Haitian population. Since the deployment of UNMIH, the Mission has been working with it to ensure respect for human rights and to assist in the strengthening of the judicial system, in prison reform and in the civic training of the National Police. It has assisted in the electoral process, whose crowning moment will be the presidential elections, set for 17 December.

My delegation must emphasize the importance of this timetable, and calls upon the parties fully to participate and to respect the results once they are announced. The international community, the United Nations, the Organization of American States and the Friends of Haiti have all worked for several years now to promote national reconciliation and to restore constitutional legitimacy and the rule of law in Haiti. These efforts, as well as those made by the Haitian authorities since the establishment of UNMIH, must not be ruined by recourse to violence by a minority that does not accept the rules of democracy.

Finally, I should like to recall the pivotal importance to lasting stability in Haiti of the country's development and economic reconstruction. My delegation is pleased in this respect by the support of the international community, to which my country has made an active contribution. It has also noted with satisfaction the numerous projects carried out in perfect synergy by the various United Nations agencies, as described in the report of the Secretary-General.

My delegation believes that the international community and the United Nations cannot disengage themselves from Haiti immediately after the presidential elections, at a crucial stage in the consolidation of peace. In this spirit, and in the light of the fundamental role played by the International Civilian Mission as well as the importance of human rights training in a country that is building democracy, my delegation is ready to extend the mandate of that Mission beyond 7 February 1996, if the Haitian authorities request it.

France, for its part, is determined to continue to render assistance to the political stability and economic prosperity of Haiti, with respect for the independence of this partner, with which we have so many different ties.

Mr. Tejera París (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation would like to convey the appreciation of the Government and people of Venezuela

to the Secretary-General and his Special Representative in Haiti and to all those who have helped, and continue to help, the legitimate Government of Haiti to restore and consolidate constitutionality. We congratulate the President of Haiti, His Excellency Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and his Government on the successes achieved.

Last year, when we considered this item in the General Assembly, we welcomed the re-establishment of the democratic institutions of Haiti, the departure of the officers responsible for the military coup and the restoration of the legitimate authorities, thus beginning a new and hopeful stage.

This new stage, we pointed out at that time, would be one of national reconciliation and the coexistence of all Haitian sectors, in order to strengthen democracy in Haiti and ensure that it is solid and lasting. Rebuilding a state of law, strengthening institutions to ensure full respect for the rights of the Haitian people and reforming the judiciary in order to ensure observance of law and order were, and remain, fundamental objectives.

Today, now that a year has gone by, we want to recognize the progress made by the Government of Haiti, in spite of the difficulties that it has faced. We are gratified — and this is reflected in the draft resolution before us today — at the holding of legislative and municipal elections in a climate of peace, with the Organization of American States, in coordination with the United Nations, as observers. Equally encouraging is the progress that has been made in the area of human rights.

We also consider the development of an intensive programme of economic and social reconstruction to be of fundamental importance. We still believe that, together with the efforts and actions aimed at strengthening and stabilizing democracy in Haiti, international cooperation must focus on the economic and social development of that country.

We witnessed with great concern the acts of violence that shook Haiti recently. We deplore the assassination of a member of Parliament, Jean-Hubert Feuillé. It was to be expected that the reaction of a people in mourning would lead to some acts of violence, but these were kept under control. We cannot turn back; the great efforts made by the Haitian people and the resolute support of the international community must not go to waste.

My country's position is one of non-interference in the internal affairs of States. We are prepared to continue to cooperate with the Government and the people of Haiti when requested so to do. We are in favour of renewing the mandate of the International Civilian Mission to Haiti because we believe that it will greatly contribute to the success of the process that is under way there. None the less, it is a position of principle of the Venezuelan Government that this participation must take place only at the request of the host country.

Lastly, we wish to reaffirm Venezuela's confidence in the future of democracy in Haiti. We are committed to this objective, and we offer our support and cooperation.

Mr. Rodrigue (Haiti) (*interpretation from French*): I should first like, on behalf of my delegation, to thank the General Assembly for the interest it has shown in my country over the past four years — interest that has been reflected in the periodic consideration of the agenda item entitled "The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti".

In this respect, I wish to thank the Secretary-General and his Special Representative for the efforts that have been made on behalf of Haiti. I also wish to thank in particular the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States (GRULAC), which introduced this item in the General Assembly in 1991, following the military *coup d'état* that brutally interrupted the country's progress towards democracy and the state of law.

The countries members of GRULAC are continuing to display solidarity with Haiti by unanimously supporting the draft resolution that has just been introduced. I cannot gloss over the role played here at the United Nations by the group called the Friends of the Secretary-General on the question of Haiti, comprising Argentina, Canada, the United States of America, France and Venezuela. Those Friends have spared no effort in the struggle for the

return of democracy to Haiti. To all the delegations that participated, in one way or another, in the apotheosis of 15 October 1994 I should like, on behalf of the people and the Government of Haiti, to express profound gratitude.

Today I am pleased to be able to report to the General Assembly on the considerable progress that has been made in Haiti in the democratic process and in the human rights situation. I am, of course, aware of the challenges that still have to be met. My assessment will perhaps seem short, in view of the expectations of the people and the objectives set by the Government. None the less, no one must underestimate the efforts made thus far for progressive improvement in the area of human rights and for the establishment of a democratic State in Haiti.

In the political context, the situation has been moving towards stabilization since the return of President Aristide. The insecurity that was rampant under the military has yielded to a climate of peace, which has made it possible for normal activities and night life to resume. The Haitian people has recovered its rights and is enjoying them without restriction. Freedom of expression and freedom of association are being fully exercised by all sectors of Haitian society.

Legislative and municipal elections, which are provided for in the Constitution, were held last 25 June. While certain organizational irregularities were deplored, all observers present emphasized the free and honest character of the elections. In less than a week, the people will once again go to the polls, this time to elect a new President who will take office on 7 February 1996. There can be no doubt that the election, which is to be held on 17 December, will strengthen the process of establishing democracy in Haiti. Everything possible has been done to ensure that it can take place in the fullest freedom, mutual tolerance and equal access to the media for candidates.

We must also note the efforts made by the Government to improve the judicial system, with a view to dispensing real justice, thus responding to the expectations of the population. In this respect, we should underscore certain measures that have been adopted: the establishment of a professional civilian police force under the Ministry of Justice; the establishment of the national penitentiary administration for the better management of detention centres; the inauguration of the Justice Academy; and the establishment of a National Commission of Truth and Justice, whose task is to shed light on the atrocities committed during the three years following the *coup d'état*.

Haiti's return to the path of democracy, following many years of authoritarian practices and corruption, is a difficult and highly delicate undertaking to which the Haitian Government, with the help of the international community, is committed. A great deal remains to be done, especially in view of the continuing presence of resistance forces that are spurred on by the opponents of change, are still operating within and outside the country and could endanger the process that is under way.

The recent attack in Port-au-Prince, in which a member of Parliament was killed and another gravely wounded, clearly points up the difficulties involved in disarming the former military and members of paramilitary forces. The population reacted violently to this new act of terrorism and clamoured for general disarmament. The Government instructed the National Police, with the help of the forces of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH), to collect all weapons circulating illegally in the country. This measure is aimed also at improving the climate of security on the eve of the presidential election and at securing the transition up to 7 February 1996. In addition, the very serious economic problems the country faces could slow down the democratic process and threaten the political stability Haiti has enjoyed to date.

By deciding to help the Haitian people restore democracy in their country, the international community has undertaken an unprecedented commitment. Today, 14 months after the restoration of the constitutional Government, significant progress has been made towards establishing democracy and a state of law in Haiti. None the less, a great deal remains to be done if lasting results are to be achieved. We therefore still need the support of the international community in order to establish the structures that are vital to the functioning of a stable

democracy, which is necessary for the development of the country.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. I should like to inform members that action on draft resolution A/50/L.53 will be taken on a later date to be announced.

Agenda item 43

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity

Report of the Secretary-General (A/50/575 and Add.1)

Draft resolution (A/50/L.51)

The President: I call on the representative of the Sudan to introduce draft resolution A/50/L.51.

Mr. Yassin (Sudan): It is my honour and pleasure on behalf of the African Group, as Chairman for this month, to present this unique resolution on the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to this distinguished body of the United Nations.

The cooperation agreement between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity has its roots in resolution 2011 (1965) of the twentieth session of the General Assembly. This was based on the recognition of the development impediments of the continent by the international community and on the role which the pre-eminent African organization, the Organization of African Unity, could play in the promotion of African development. The idea essentially was that there should be cooperation between the Organization of African Unity, on the one hand, and the United Nations specialized agencies and other organizations within the United Nations system, on the other hand.

Over the years, the successive resolutions on this subject have been an invaluable asset to the development process in African countries. The resolutions have served as the principal guidelines for the priority areas in which there should be cooperation in order to alleviate poverty and promote sustainable development of African countries. However, it is common knowledge today that the continent is still emerging from the woods. All available indicators of development show a stagnation or deterioration of economic growth and development. Therefore it has not been surprising that poverty has been aggravated in many countries in the last few years.

At the same time, the number of least developed countries in Africa, according to United Nations classifications, has increased rampantly. The Organization of African Unity welcomes the continued cooperation and support of the international community for Africa's development. However, in an increasingly competitive world economy, in which the weak position of African countries is tantamount to marginalization, there is an urgent need to re-examine the importance of cooperation and focus more on those critical facets of Africa's development in the context of the present and future political and social and economic environment of the continent.

The present resolution is an updated version of resolution 49/64 on the same subject. It has two conventional parts: the preamble and the operative part. The preamble has 15 paragraphs, which review the legal basis of the resolution and past international, regional and national efforts to solve the development problems in Africa. Furthermore, the preamble describes the fundamental political and social and economic development problems in Africa. The operative part is made up of 24 paragraphs, which identify political and economic issues for which the urgent cooperation of the United Nations is required. The important areas in which requests to the international community are made include the following: first, cooperation with the Organization of African Unity in the pacific settlement of disputes and the maintenance of international peace and security in Africa; second, support to the Organization of African Unity in its efforts to manage a peaceful democratic transition in Africa; third, financial and technical support to the Organization of African Unity in its efforts to cope with the problems of refugees and displaced persons; fourth,

support for the operations of the African Economic Community and other regional economic integration arrangements in Africa; fifth, the adoption of appropriate measures for the effective implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and of the conduct of the mid-term review of its implementation in 1996; sixth, support for measures to enhance and increase resource flows, debt relief, and diversification of African economies.

Allow me, in conclusion, to emphasize that all African Governments are now, more than at any other time in the past, committed to the promotion of development and increasing the competitiveness of their countries in the international economy. This, as we all know, has been well demonstrated in their consistent implementation of far-reaching economic and political reforms. However, it has become increasingly obvious today that carrying all these to a logical conclusion for these reforms to bear fruit would require timely and significant support from the international community. Within this frame of perception, the efforts of the United Nations must go beyond the adoption of this resolution. There should be an appropriate machinery for the effective implementation of the resolution. The United Nations agencies' capacity to implement must be consolidated through the provision of adequate funds to carry out the agreements in the operative part.

Mr. Zulueta (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The European Union follows with interest the item under discussion today. This item provides the opportunity to stress the crucial role regional organizations can play in meeting the challenges we are facing today in the political, social and economic fields. In this respect, the Organization of African Unity has made important progress in improving the prospects for lasting peace and sustainable development in Africa and in increasing the wider international community's awareness of Africa's most acute problems. The European Union notes with appreciation the areas of cooperation and consultation between the OAU and the United Nations and its specialized agencies in Africa. The report of the Secretary-General of 17 October (A/50/575), complemented by its addendum of 17 November 1995, demonstrates the constructive role of the OAU in several fields.

Mr. Abebe (Congo), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Furthermore, the European Union maintains close ties of friendship and cooperation with Africa, and this makes us particularly aware of the great challenges Africa faces and the need to face them together. We are ready to assist the African countries in their efforts to bring about economic and political reforms, in close cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations. In December 1994, the European Union and the OAU agreed to hold regular meetings, to exchange views and coordinate policies in Africa. This political dialogue and cooperation have proved to be very fruitful and important.

Africa has experienced enormous changes over the last few years and the African States have come a long way in that time. Multi-party elections are now a feature of life in much of Africa. However, a great deal remains to be done for the establishment and consolidation of democracy in a continent still subject to political and social instability. The European Union welcomes the role of the OAU in promoting good governance and economic self-reliance in Africa.

Africa is witnessing a crucial time in its history, which underlines the need for concerted action by the international community in order to overcome the devastation caused in many countries by fratricidal wars and years of mistrust, and to enable its people to embark on the path of genuine national reconciliation and to achieve peace, democracy and development. It is a time of hope and expectations. It is also a time for assuming responsibilities, for facing realities and for taking initiatives. In this regard, the European Union has welcomed the Cairo Agenda for Action, which bears witness to the fact that African countries are increasingly aware of the need to face and solve their problems themselves.

The European Union is studying ways in which it can support the OAU's efforts to assume greater responsibility in the field of conflict prevention and resolution. The European Union believes that for a successful approach to conflict prevention and resolution in Africa close cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU is of utmost importance. It welcomes the efforts which both organizations are making to improve links between them.

The goals of the European Union in this area are to enhance the capacity of the OAU in early warning, preventive diplomacy, generation of capacities and deployment of peace-keeping forces; to back the democratization of the Continent; to encourage respect for and the implementation of human rights; to contribute to national reconciliation and political stability at the regional level; and to support regional initiatives in the area.

In this regard, we follow with interest the work of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and we welcome the practical assistance it has received from the Centre for Human Rights of the United Nations.

The members of the European Union have been actively involved in searching for ways to enhance the preparedness of African countries and organizations to participate in conflict prevention and management in their continent. The United Nations has a clear role to play in encouraging and facilitating training and other capacity building, often in cooperation with the OAU. The European Union, therefore, warmly welcomes the proposals in the Secretary-General's practically oriented report on this subject — document A/50/711 of 1 November 1995 — on improving preparedness for conflict prevention and peace-keeping in Africa. The members of the Union will consider how best to support the United Nations efforts and proposals, including through the Trust Fund established for the purposes set out in the report.

We consider that cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU, within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations, should be developed in the fields of preventive diplomacy and peace-keeping. Cooperation with subregional groups of countries should be also encouraged.

It is also important that the United Nations and the OAU work together in further developing the rapid reaction capability of the United Nations in peace-keeping operations. We also hope that Africa will increase its participation in the United Nations stand-by arrangements and will participate in the rapidly deployable Headquarters capability recently proposed by the Department of Peace-keeping Operations.

Africa continues to face chronic problems which affect its development. International solidarity and the assistance of the international community must complement the national resources mobilized by the African countries themselves. The European Union is contributing much of the necessary means to assist in the development of the Continent. The traditional cooperation of the European Union with many African countries under the Lomé agreements is the cornerstone of our efforts. In this respect, and building on the decisions taken by the European Council at Cannes to increase the resources allocated to the European Development Fund, an agreement was signed in Mauritius on 4 November 1995, to cover European assistance up to the year 2000.

It is now universally recognized that the purpose of any policy of development is the achievement of sustainable development centred on the human being. In this regard, it is essential for African countries themselves to promote sustainable development and greater political stability through, *inter alia*, State structures adapted to the new realities, the establishment of democratic political systems, a responsible and transparent management of public affairs, and respect and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We are convinced that with the concerted action of the international community, Africa will be able to approach the new millennium with renovated strength, working towards a future of peace, democracy and development. The European Union will continue its efforts in this regard.

The European Union has firmly condemned the execution on 10 November 1995 of Mr. Ken Saro-Wiwa and his eight co-defendants. This execution, after a

flawed judicial process, constituted a clear failure by Nigeria to honour its commitment to human rights, which stems from a number of international instruments to which it is a party. The Nigerian authorities should have no doubt as to the depth of feeling on the part of the international community regarding the political and human rights situation in Nigeria. In this respect, the European Union recalls the common position adopted by its Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs on 20 November 1995, complemented by the common position adopted on 4 December 1995, whereby measures against Nigeria were adopted.

Mr. Eteffa (Ethiopia): As a representative of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), I am delighted to participate in the debate on this important agenda item relating to cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his informative and valuable report and pledge the full support of my delegation for his endeavours to further enhance the cooperation of the two organizations.

The report before us, which is contained in document A/50/575 of 17 October 1995, demonstrates that the areas of cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU have been further expanded and strengthened since last year. We note that the OAU and the various humanitarian, technical and development agencies of the United Nations have increased consultations and cooperation in a variety of fields. Especially since both the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) are located in Addis Ababa, the two organizations have been working hand in hand.

These positive developments not only testify to the commitment of the two organizations to work together, but also show concretely their desire to expand fields of cooperation and strengthen the existing ones. We welcome this constructive spirit and we believe that there is great potential for further strengthened cooperation between the two organizations within the framework of their Charters. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity is essential not only because it is a requirement derived from the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, but also because it is one of the most effective and indispensable ways of addressing the multifaceted problems and challenges confronting the international community in today's interdependent world.

The Secretariats of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity have taken steps to coordinate their activities in various fields, ranging from the deployment of observers to the joint organization of conferences to address economic and social issues. In particular, we wish to commend the Secretariats of the two organizations for the positive outcome of their consultation held from 6 to 9 November 1995 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It is our hope that serious efforts will be made on both sides in the follow-up to and implementation of the recommendations adopted during this consultative meeting.

The exchange of experience and information in technical and development areas and provision of financial assistance to various projects are the major aspects of cooperation. The activities of the various United Nations agencies and programmes and their cooperation with the OAU and its member States over the past years have been encouraging and should be strengthened further. The active support and involvement of the United Nations, in particular in mobilizing resources for the development programmes and endeavours of Africa, is crucial to address the continent's precarious socio-economic situation.

Africa's common strategy to mitigate and overcome its socio-economic problems has been spelt out in the Abuja Treaty which has now become operational. The Cairo Agenda for Action for relaunching Africa's economic and social development, adopted in March 1995, clearly identifies the priority areas that need to be focused on. The efforts of the United Nations and its various programmes and initiatives relating to economic and social development in Africa, in particular those adopted by the General Assembly, have not brought about the desired results, partly due to a lack of serious commitment on the part of the international community. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity in the economic and social

fields should focus on practical ways and means of coordinating and implementing initiatives taken and commitments made at the regional and international levels. In this respect, special mention should be made of the valuable contributions of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

The cooperation between the Organization of African Unity and the Economic Commission for Africa to make the African Economic Community operational and to mobilize resources for its activities is commendable and deserves the support and encouragement of the international community at large. Furthermore, we applaud the collaboration between the OAU and the ECA in different areas, such as the preparation of a common African position on human and social development in Africa and the holding of important regional conferences and seminars on topics of vital importance to Africa. The ECA's potential and comparative advantage in serving as a vehicle for enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity in the economic, social and related fields should be fully explored and utilized.

The problem of refugees and displaced persons in Africa is a matter of grave concern, and efforts to address this situation require greater cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. The convening of the Regional Conference on Assistance to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in the Great Lakes Region, held in Bujumbura in February 1995, was an important step. We commend the cooperation and coordination between the two Organizations in this regard and call upon the international community to provide assistance for the implementation of the Plan of Action adopted by the Conference.

Conflict resolution is one of the top priorities in Africa because peace and stability are among the prerequisites for development, and vice versa. It is, therefore, necessary to develop the capacity of Africa for peace. Although significant steps have been taken by the OAU and the United Nations in the area of peacemaking and peace-keeping during the past years, conflicts have still persisted in many parts of our continent. The resolution of conflicts has been slow in Africa partly because the challenges that the OAU and the United Nations are facing are far greater than the means and resources available to them to respond urgently and effectively.

Indeed, the commitment of African States has already been partially translated into concrete actions. Within three short years, the Mechanism has brought a new institutional dynamism to the OAU, enabling speedy action to prevent, manage and ultimately resolve conflicts wherever they occur.

At their most recent summit meeting in Addis Ababa, our leaders endorsed the recommendation of the Council of Ministers at its sixty-second session that Africa should continue its endeavours to develop and enhance its capacity in the fields of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and conflict resolution in general. While recognizing that the ultimate responsibility in the sphere of peace-keeping rests with the United Nations, our leaders have once again affirmed that Africa is ready and willing to play its appropriate role in this regard.

The OAU is now involved in carrying out various projects designed to enhance its capacity to deal with conflicts. These projects include the construction of a conflict-management centre and the establishment of an early-warning system. It is also planning to conduct a series of seminars and workshops to develop African capacity in early-warning, peacemaking and peace-keeping activities.

The commitment manifested and the vigorous attempts being made by African countries in this direction deserve the unreserved support of the international community. The United Nations is called upon to enter into partnership with the OAU with a view to surmounting jointly one of the major challenges facing Africa and the world at large: the resolution of conflicts and the enhancement of peace and stability.

While the process involving peacemaking, reconciliation and peace-keeping operations should have genuine global characteristics, the countries of the region could make positive contributions by responding in a

timely and cost-effective manner if they were given the necessary resources, strict coordination, proper orientation, training and commitment. The report before us indicates that cooperation and coordination between the two Organizations are moving in the right direction.

Mediation and conflict resolution would, among other things, involve knowledge of the historical background of conflicts, the cultural and linguistic sensibilities of the people, their relationships with neighbouring peoples and States and the whole social, cultural and economic environment surrounding a given conflict.

Allow me to reiterate once again Ethiopia's conviction that the activities of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity in the fields of peacemaking, peace-keeping and development are mutually reinforcing and complementary. Therefore, enhanced cooperation on the basis of effective partnership in the maintenance of peace and security in Africa and in human-centred sustainable growth and development is very important.

Action-oriented undertakings of the United Nations and the OAU would include the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance, effective peace-keeping operations, peacemaking and peace-building efforts and efforts that would contribute to socio-economic progress and poverty alleviation. It seems obvious that paper-oriented activities have so far had a disproportionate role in the cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations. More often than not, negotiated texts and voluminous documents are taken as ends in themselves rather than as means of achieving concrete results in the various fields of endeavour. Field-oriented, action-based cooperation should go beyond the piles and piles of documents, which have negative implications for and impact on the environment rather than any practical significance. That is why my delegation has been calling for cooperation and partnership characterized by action that would have a positive and lasting impact on the lives of ordinary men and women in Africa.

Finally, the ability of the United Nations and the OAU to intervene in a substantial way would depend on the political will of the Member States to cooperate and make adequate resources available. One of the hindrances to international cooperation is the pursuit of narrow national interests. In the past, the international community has paid very dearly for such pursuits in terms of human life and material resources. To recall a historical phenomenon, some countries of the League of Nations did not want to hear about injustice "somewhere". "Injustice somewhere is not our business", was the attitude. However, there cannot be enough incentives and initiatives to do something concrete unless abject poverty somewhere and injustice somewhere become our business. One of the frameworks for involvement in international issues ought to be a genuine concern for the plight of fellow human beings. Therefore, in today's interdependent world, narrow national interests should not overshadow global vision.

It is in this spirit that Ethiopia is a sponsor of the draft resolution before us and hopes that it will be unanimously adopted by the Assembly.

Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) is today more necessary than ever, since the complex and acute problems facing the African continent must be addressed in strict cooperation between the two Organizations.

In his report of 1 November 1995 on improving the preparedness for conflict prevention and peace-keeping in Africa, the Secretary-General stresses the importance of this cooperation and the need to develop and optimize the joint activities of the two Organizations. We believe that they can promote relations of complementarity in the fields of conflict prevention and peace-keeping, as has been particularly well illustrated in Liberia, Rwanda and Burundi, on the understanding that the Security Council remains the main organ in this respect and has primary responsibility for international peace and security.

Since its creation in 1993, the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa has proved very useful in easing tensions and preventing conflicts on the continent. Its accumulated experience and the trust and support it enjoys from African Governments have enabled it to

continue to play the important role assigned to it. However, its work would be more effective if it had the real support of the international community and were able to count on adequate financial resources and material means.

It goes without saying that cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations in strengthening the action of the Central Organ is fundamental. We are gratified that the United Nations Secretary-General has decided to post a liaison officer at OAU headquarters to facilitate a better use of resources and more effective coordination with regard to certain problems. Similarly, we are satisfied at the conclusion of an agreement between the two Organizations to establish a staff-exchange programme to strengthen the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism.

In this connection, we should like to emphasize the importance of conflict prevention in Africa, which should not be limited to security aspects but should also encompass aspects related to development. It is vital that cooperation between the two Organizations be focused on prevention in all its dimensions.

To that end, it is necessary to develop procedures for communication and coordination between the United Nations and the OAU in the area of data collection and early warning.

The Organization of African Unity has already begun to develop an information-based prevention system. The Secretary-General's proposal that the United Nations assist in organizing an OAU operations centre to improve that Organization's information-gathering capability deserves support.

In addition — and still within the context of prevention — countries whose institutions and infrastructures have been destroyed by a long period of internal war today need more assistance from the international community to help them rebuild their economies and improve the living conditions of their peoples, for without sustained economic and social development, internal tensions will continue to germinate and threaten to erupt into bloody conflict.

With regard to the maintenance of peace, cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity has proved very useful in facilitating progress in the peace process and the easing of tensions. This has been especially true in Burundi, where the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism took the initiative of sending military observers to prevent the deterioration of the situation in that country while maintaining contacts for cooperation and exchange of information with the United Nations.

We hope that the cooperation between the two Organizations will be further strengthened in the sphere of peace-keeping in Africa by the lessons drawn from past experiences and improved means of prevention.

In this context, the establishment of specialized peace-keeping units within the national armed forces of African States should be encouraged so that timely action can be taken when necessary. In this respect, we endorse the Secretary-General's idea of creating United Nations stand-by arrangements in a framework of partnership, which would make it possible for troop contributors that lack the resources necessary to make their troops operational to meet any material or logistical shortfall.

Cooperation between the two Organizations is also needed in the field of development at a time when Africa is confronted with various problems preventing its attainment of sustainable economic growth, solutions for which do not seem close at hand.

Indeed, since 1990 official development assistance for Africa has continued to decline, and direct foreign investment remains weak in a very difficult international situation characterized by fierce trade competition, which the Uruguay Round agreements have made even more onerous for the African countries. In addition, the debt burden continues to weigh heavily on the economies of those countries and to obstruct their development policies.

The holding of a high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council at Geneva last summer made it possible to examine the problems confronting

Africa and to emphasize the need for international cooperation to help that continent meet the challenge of development.

In addition, action plans and the results of various conferences and international and regional gatherings on social development, women, desertification, international trade or children, whose follow-up within the United Nations should give priority to Africa, should serve as guidelines for concerted action by both Organizations in those fields.

In another connection, the problem of refugees and displaced persons, a constant source of tension and instability, should be accorded the attention and interest it deserves. We hope that the Plan of Action adopted by the Regional Conference on Assistance to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in the Great Lakes Region will be given the support necessary for its implementation. In this respect, my delegation is gratified by the efforts being made by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, in conjunction with the OAU, to assist refugees and find solutions to their plight.

In addition, we would like to emphasize the need to convene an international conference to examine all the problems of the Great Lakes region so that the international community can adopt a comprehensive approach to their solution.

In this context, we cannot but express once again our concern at the lack of progress in the real implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s as we approach the mid-term review planned for 1996.

It is worth recalling that that New Agenda, adopted in General Assembly resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991, has as its priority objectives

> "the accelerated transformation, integration, diversification and growth of the African economies, in order to strengthen them within the world economy, reduce their vulnerability to external shocks and increase their dynamism, internalize the process of development and enhance self-reliance." *(resolution 46/151, annex II, para. 6)*

In this connection, we wish to stress that the international community's commitments for the attainment of those goals should be taken to mean that while African development is primarily the responsibility of the African countries themselves, the international community should act in their support. For some years now, those countries have made important reforms in the management of their economies. We believe that those efforts deserve encouragement, especially through the mobilization of resources, debt relief, economic diversification and an accelerated process of implementation of the African Economic Community.

Here I would like to echo the proposal made by President Ben Ali, Chairman of the OAU last year, for a global economic and social plan aimed at ensuring the development of Africa on a sound and lasting basis, helping our continent overcome its shortcomings and become integrated into the world economy and ensuring dignified conditions of life for all the peoples of the continent.

That plan should have as its principal goal the strengthening of African capabilities through the mobilization of financial resources, the intensification of technological assistance and the consolidation of industrialization through partnership, direct investment, trade and a search for a solution to the debt problem. We believe that cooperation between the OAU and the United Nations will be of invaluable assistance in that process.

In conclusion, I should like to pay tribute to the Secretaries-General of the two Organizations, who have never stopped enhancing cooperation since it was established by agreement in 1965. We wish to express our satisfaction at the spirit of harmony and earnestness that has prevailed in the relationship between the two Organizations at a time when Africa is determined to meet its major challenges.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): In accordance with General Assembly resolution

2011 (XX) of 11 October 1965, I now call upon the Observer for the Organization of Unity.

Mr. Sy (Organization of African Unity (OAU)) (*interpretation from French*): The 30-year cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has yielded significant successes, such as the liberation of many African countries from the colonial yoke and, more recently, the establishment of a democratic regime in South Africa. These successes have encouraged the two organizations to join forces to face post-cold-war challenges and to engage in new areas of cooperation, including preventive diplomacy, the restoration of peace, the observation of elections, sustainable development and the promotion of human rights.

These new fields of cooperation call for new methods, procedures and structures to support cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU. For its part, the OAU intends fully to play its rightful role in this process and has therefore adopted a number of measures and initiatives to support United Nations action in several areas, especially in the areas of conflict resolution, democratization, development and economic integration.

The Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, established by OAU Heads of State or Government, has been in operation for two years. That brief experience has taught us the importance of developing the preventive functions of the Mechanism in order to stop conflicts from degenerating into vast humanitarian crises. For preventive diplomacy to be successful, there must be an early-warning system to apprise us of the onset of a conflict. That is why the OAU continues to work to strengthen its capabilities in the area of conflict prevention, specifically through the establishment of the OAU Conflict Management Division, the creation of an early-warning system, the establishment of a data bank, and the formation within the armed forces of its member States specialized units to be made available to the OAU and the United Nations for deployment if needed. In that connection, the OAU will be holding a seminar in January 1996 on early warning, with a view to more in-depth consideration of the various aspects of this concept.

At its sixty-second ordinary session, the Council of Ministers of the OAU reaffirmed its position that primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security lies with the Security Council. The Council of Ministers also stated its belief that Africa must now make a serious effort to develop and strengthen its capacities in the area of peace-keeping. This would enable Africa to participate in peace-keeping operations either under United Nations auspices or, if circumstances require it, under the auspices of the OAU. It is to be understood, however, that the latter alternative must be the exception and that preventive diplomacy remains the priority for the OAU. In the light of those considerations, the Council of Ministers has recommended that member States should have contingents on stand-by for an operation specializing in peace-keeping.

In addition to these efforts to increase its capability to influence the course of conflicts in Africa, the OAU has in the past year taken important initiatives to find peaceful solutions to several of the conflicts that rage on our continent.

Thus, in Somalia, from which the United Nations Operation in Somalia withdrew in March 1995, the OAU has continued to follow the situation closely and to take initiatives to encourage the process of national reconciliation. Under OAU auspices, a mission of eminent Somalis from Ethiopia was sent to Somalia. Another tripartite mission with the participation of Tunisia, Ethiopia and the OAU secretariat was sent to Somalia, and came to the conclusion that we have yet to explore all the possibilities for national peace in Somalia, and that the OAU should continue to follow the situation closely and to encourage and support the various factions at a time when they are moving towards consensus.

In Liberia, the OAU has continued to support the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with a view to achieving a peaceful settlement. Thus, the OAU Eminent Person for Liberia, Mr. Canaan Banana, and the Secretary-General of the OAU have participated actively in consultations and negotiations that have made possible the installation of a new Council of State. We are pleased to note that the

cease-fire that came into force on 26 August 1995 has held, despite a few violations. Similarly, disengagement and disarmament of troops continues. The OAU, which has been following the situation with close attention, has appealed to the international community to provide the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) with the resources it needs to continue its mission in Liberia with success. I reiterate that appeal today. It is important for the success of the peace process that ECOMOG have the logistical support it needs to discharge the tasks entrusted to it under the Abuja agreement.

Developments in neighbouring Sierra Leone are also of great concern to the OAU, and our organization sent a mission of inquiry to that country. The mission took note of the willingness of the Government to negotiate with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Despite serious problems in maintaining lasting contacts, the OAU continues to strive to put an end to the conflict. A recent meeting at Abidjan with a representative of the RUF was certainly a positive step in this regard.

Turning to Rwanda, the efforts of the Government of that country and the international community to restore peace, security and stability give us reason to hope. Aware of the unique role the OAU has played in the past, and continues to play, by facilitating national reconciliation, the Secretary-General of the OAU paid a working visit to Rwanda from 1 to 5 April 1995. To help Rwanda create conditions favouring national reconciliation, the OAU, Africa in general and the entire international community must recognize that justice is indispensable for national reconciliation and must act quickly to assist the Government of Rwanda by providing the resources and the technical expertise it needs so badly to ensure the administration of justice. It is important here to stress how critical it is for the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda to accelerate its work: the longer it delays, the greater the risk of giving the impression of justice denied.

The refugee question remains a problem both for Rwanda and for the countries of asylum. In cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the OAU organized the Regional Conference on Assistance to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in the Great Lakes Region, which was held at Bujumbura in February 1995. The conference adopted decisions that ought to be implemented as soon as possible. In this context, the OAU has supported efforts to convene a United Nations conference on peace, security and stability in the Great Lakes region. It should be noted that the recent Cairo conference of the OAU marked a significant development in that regard.

The situation in Burundi continues to be a major concern for the OAU. Owing to the deterioration of the situation, the OAU has sent several ministerial missions to help defuse the crisis. Similarly, the OAU has increased the number of its military observers in Burundi and is planning to strengthen the civilian presence. The OAU has also reaffirmed its support for the Convention of Government and has appealed to all political forces, to the army and to the security forces to work together for the implementation of the Convention with a view to the restoration and consolidation of peace and security in Burundi. Moreover, the OAU has called on its member States and the international community at large to encourage, promote and support moderate elements in Burundi and to do everything possible to isolate and neutralize extremist elements and to disarm and dismantle militias in that country.

The initiatives undertaken by the OAU in the sphere of conflict resolution are paralleled by the organization's activities to relaunch economic growth and development and promote economic integration. Thus, the Council of Ministers of the OAU held an extraordinary session on 27 and 28 March, at Cairo, and adopted the Cairo Agenda for Action for relaunching Africa's economic and social development.

This Cairo Agenda for Action draws the appropriate conclusions from numerous plans and programmes for Africa which have not been applied. It also has identified what the African countries can do for themselves, individually and collectively. In this context, the need was emphasized to create an environment which is favourable to peace, security, the proper management of affairs and political stability.

The Cairo Agenda for Action also emphasizes three major areas in which assistance from the international community is desired, namely that of the foreign debt of Africa, commercial exchange, including the benefits to be derived from the Uruguay Round and, finally, foreign direct investment.

As regards economic integration, the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community entered into force more than a year ago. Progress has also been made in drawing up the drafts of the protocol to be annexed to the Treaty. The priority today is the harmonization and coordination of activities within and between the various regional communities.

The efforts of the OAU in the political and economic fields need to be supplemented adequately by the international community and, first of all, by the United Nations. This was the task addressed by the tenth annual meeting on cooperation between the United Nations system and the Organization of African Unity, held in Addis Ababa from 6 to 9 November 1995.

In the area of preventive diplomacy, the meeting recommended that the United Nations assist the OAU by providing it technical assistance to train its personnel. It also recommended that the United Nations and the OAU cooperate in the exchange and coordination of information between their respective early warning systems.

With reference to the restoration of peace, it was agreed that the United Nations would cooperate with the OAU regarding its peace initiatives in Africa and would support it in the mobilization of financial and logistic resources necessary for its operations to re-establish peace.

Regarding the implementation of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, the Addis Ababa meeting recommended that the specialized agencies and bodies of the United Nations system cooperate with the OAU in strengthening the institutional, analytic and operational capacities of the regional communities.

Those are some of the major recommendations of the Addis Ababa meeting which are reflected in the draft resolution introduced this afternoon by the Permanent Representative of the Sudan on behalf of the African States.

I should therefore like, in conclusion, to request all the Member States to support the draft resolution contained in document A/50/L.51.

The Acting President (*interpretation from French*): We have heard the last speaker under this agenda item.

Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to inform members that the General Assembly will take action on draft resolution A/50/L.51 at a later date, which will be announced.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.